



NEWS

RELEASE

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SBA LAUNCHES NEW SIGNAGE WEB SITE TO ASSIST SMALL BUSINESSES IN MARKETING EFFORTS

WASHINGTON – The Office of Business and Community Initiatives of the U.S. Small Business Administration, SBA, recently launched a signage section on the SBA's award-winning Web site, with content designed to help small business owners in their search for new and innovative ways to communicate information about their products and services.

The site, <http://www.sba.gov/starting/signage/index.htm>, is the result of a joint project by the SBA and the Signage Foundation For Communication Excellence, Inc. The foundation provided the funding, contents and subject expertise, while the SBA supplied the Internet platform and technical means to launch and maintain the site.

This joint effort represents the latest stage in a long-standing history of cooperation between the two entities, and is based on the principle that in today's very competitive business environment, good on-premise signage is essential to helping achieve business vitality. Signs are the most effective, affordable form of advertising for the small business, and an inexpensive method to maximize returns per dollar spent.

"Our office is delighted to be sponsoring this excellent Web site with the Signage Foundation," said Clifton Toulson, Jr., Associate Administrator for Business and Community Initiatives. **"It is a solid, in-depth resource on a subject of great importance to every small business owner's marketing plan."**

Toulson noted that the foundation had previously collaborated with SBA on management assistance publications on signage, and also provided information for use of district directors in preparing articles for local news media.

The new Web site is designed to provide an overview of signage as a cost-effective, broad-reaching marketing tool and critical component of a company's success. It features an easy-to-navigate architecture and very comprehensive sections introducing small business owners to the most important issues related to signage. The sections include *Why Use Signage*, *Types of Signage*, *Understanding the Value of Signage*, *Obtaining Your Signage*, *FAQ's*, *Legal Considerations*, *Glossary*, *Sign Gallery* and a link to the *Signage Foundation Homepage* (<http://www.signagefoundation.org>.)

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“This innovative Web site provides marketing and advertising strategies for small businesses to help them survive in an extremely competitive environment,” said R. James Claus, Co-Executive Director of the Signage Foundation, who was instrumental in the implementation of the project. **“Once again the SBA is at the forefront in disseminating critical information to benefit our democratically based small business community.”**

Choosing good signage and a successful business identification format depends on the type of business, goals, and other factors specifically related to the company. Of particular interest are zoning and legal considerations, which are dealt with in-depth on the Web site.

Well-designed signs enhance, make more attractive and can even reduce traffic accidents and crime in the zones in which they are located. Since the opposite also applies, signs must meet strict zoning requirements. A measure of the relevance of signage for both businesses and communities is that signage issues have even reached the U.S. Supreme Court.

Many merchants increase their business measurably just by adding a good sign. Conversely, many have gone out of business because they simply were poorly identified, so that not enough potential customers knew of their existence. As one sign industry professional put it, *“A business without a sign is a sign of no business.”* The signage Web site gives small business owners a powerful tool to help them in their advertising strategy and enhance their chances for success.

The SBA’s Web site offers extensive information on all SBA programs and services, as well as links to other important sources of small business management information.

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For more information about all of SBA’s programs for small businesses, call the SBA Answer Desk at 1-800 U ASK SBA or TDD 704-344-6640. Also visit the SBA’s extensive Web site at www.sba.gov.

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